



# RUSSIAN FAIRY TALES

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The existence of the Russian Skazki or Märchen was first made generally known to the British public by Mr. Ralston in his "Russian Folk-Tales." A year after the appearance of that book, the eminent Russian historian and archaeologist, Peter Nikolaevich Polevoi (well known, too, as an able and ardent Shakespearean scholar), selected from the inexhaustible stores of Afanasiev some three dozen of the Skazki, and worked them up into a fairy-tale book which was published at St Petersburg in 1874, under the title of "Narodnuiya Russkiya Skazki" ("Popular Russian Tales"). Mr. Polevoi did his work excellently well, and, while softening the crudities and smoothing out the occasional roughness of these charming stories, neither injured their simple texture nor overlaid the original pattern. It is from the first Russian edition of Mr. Polevoi's book that the following selection has been made.

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